



MONTEREY NEWS

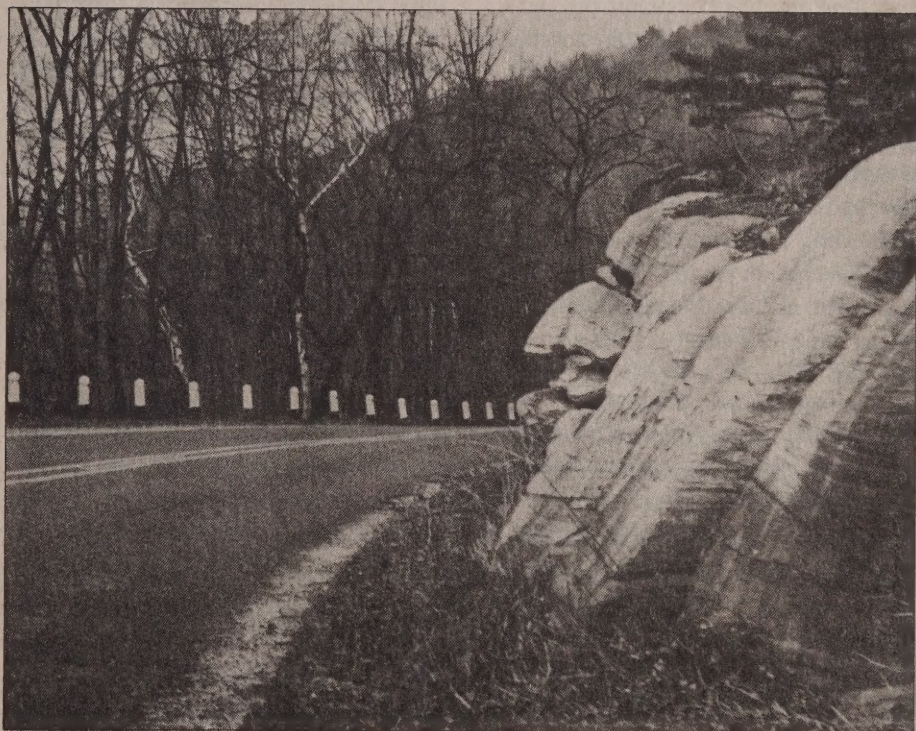
February 2000
VOLUME XXX · Number 2



The Town

Appeal Dropped: The Complaint against the Zoning Board of Appeals filed by the Planning Board and the Select Board was withdrawn. In a unanimous vote, the Select Board voted to withdraw their complaint related to a Special Permit granted by the Board of Appeals on November 19 for the Rosen property. The Board instructed the Town Counsel in this matter as the complaint written by the Counsel did not accurately reflect the Board's position. Present for the discussion on January 3 were Dean Amidon, John Ryder, and Mark Makuc representing the Zoning Board of Appeals and Stefan Grotz, attorney for the Rosens. At the present time plans for the property are progressing in accordance with the Special Permit granted by the Zoning Board.

Monterey School: Southern Berkshire Regional School District Superintendent William Cooper and Business Manager Maryellen Brown met with the Select Board on January 10 to discuss a district proposal that classes at the Monterey School be suspended for the 2000-01 school year due to low enrollment. The Select Board stated their strong opposition to the proposal. Susan Andersen, Monterey School teacher, attended the meeting and spoke on past and present fluctuations in enrollment. The Select Board was clear in their resolve to maintain a school in the Town of Monterey. Several options were suggested by both the Superintendent and the Board, which may bear further consideration. In subsequent meetings of the Regional School Board, the option of a two-year kindergarten in Monterey with all four-year-olds welcome was suggested. Even



Leona Chamberlin took this photo in 1952 of the rock formation on Route 23 near Stevens Lake that we all drive by so often.

the consideration of transporting children from other towns to boost enrollment was on the table. The Select Board is glad to hear that several options, aside from closing are being discussed and look forward to a well-considered solution to this problem.

Skating Rink Hours: The Skating Rink will be open daily Monday through Friday from 3-5 p.m. for family skating. Residents of Monterey and the surrounding area are welcome to come and skate. Those who wish may bring hockey sticks, but no formal games will take place during those hours in order to accommodate skaters of all ages and tastes.

Dog Control: The Select Board held a public hearing on January 25 to review Town bylaws on dog licensing

and control. The Animal Control Officer, Martin Clark, met with the Board the week prior to the public hearing to discuss proposed changes to the by-laws. During the public hearing the Town Clerk, Barbara Swann recommended licensing of cats, but no action was taken in this regard.

Discussion ranged from the definition of keeping a pet in control to strategies for keeping Town parks and byways clean of animal feces. The Board read through proposed amendments and heard comments and critiques from those present. While not willing to reprint the Massachusetts General Dog Law, the Select Board is working on some proposed amendments, which will be voted on in a special Town Meeting sometime

in March. As well, the Town Clerk has agreed to make public highlights of Massachusetts Dog Laws. This will either be distributed along with licenses in March and/or printed in the *Monterey News*.

Fire Department Notes: Fire Chief Ray Tryon requests that all private fire alarm systems in homes be registered upon installation and that those registrations be renewed annually, in the same way burglar alarms are registered with the police. The Fire Department recommends that any alarm system, but particularly those in homes that are not inhabited year-round, be wired to notify a caretaker. By law the first false alarm is free, the second will cost the owner a fine, and the third may result in disconnection of the fire alarm system. The Department recommends either that a caretaker be notified before or along with the Fire Department, in order to open a house, or that part-time residents consider a lock-box option. For details, please feel free to contact Chief Tryon.

Also, state law requires that all homes in Town have 911 house numbers that are easily visible from the road.

The Monterey Fire Company has agreed to incur the expense for lighting

the flag in Veterans Memorial Park. As well as paying for installation, the company will pay the electric bills. The park is on Town property managed by the Cemetery Committee and overseen by the Veteran's Memorial Committee. At this time quotes are being gathered for the electrical installation for the lights.

The Monterey Fire Company wants it known that people may wish to save the following dates:

May 27: Firehouse Dancers Dance

July 29: 22nd Annual Steak Roast

October 7: 2nd Annual Firemen's Ball

It looks like July 29, 2000, is going to be a big day in Monterey. Not only will there be the Steak Roast, but this year's incarnation of I Love Monterey Day will include: a big day at Gould Farm, with a barn raising by the Timber Framers' Guild, sawing exhibitions, food and entertainment, and tours of the Farm, the Fish Hatchery, and other local sights. In addition, the Park Commission will hold the Knox Trail Run and Fun Run that day. So plan to be here for the festivities!

— Amy B. Goldfarb

Tax Credit for Septic System Repairs

Effective for tax years beginning January 1997, owners of residential properties in Massachusetts who expend money to repair or replace a failed cesspool or septic system are entitled to a tax credit against their Massachusetts personal income tax. Payments for sewer connections are also eligible if the connection is replacing a failed cesspool or septic system.

The forms for eligible homeowners to file with their 1999 Massachusetts income tax returns are available at the Monterey Town Hall.

The Massachusetts Department of Revenue operates a help line at 1-800-392-6089 to answer any questions about this program.



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The *Monterey News* is published monthly under the auspices of Monterey United Church of Christ, Monterey, MA 01245.

Monterey Land Trust News

Here we are in the year 2000 and, Wow! Our Land Trust is now fifteen years old and going strong. At present we are working on our land tally, but it looks as though we own in fee over 525 acres, have preserved via conservation restrictions 1075 acres, and hold Agricultural Preservation Restrictions (APR) on over 40 acres. We have a devoted Board of Directors.

This year found us the incalculably grateful recipients of a \$100,000 legacy from our valued friend and intensely missed Sally Fijux. She loved our Land Trust and we loved her. Her bequest will go a long way not only in helping us achieve an endowment fund, but in enabling us to reach out more effectively to those who would like to see their land preserved for the future. For example, we might now be able to help a farmer by providing an up-front cash loan while he/she awaits an APR allocation, or we might be able to offer a stake in buying a restriction, or to help pay for an appraisal if necessary.

We hope landowners who may have concerns about the preservation of their properties will feel free to call us with those concerns. An outright land donation or the more complicated, but effective, conservation restriction option is an effective way to save your land. There are considerable tax advantages either way, but more importantly you will know that your land will be safe in perpetuity. It is hard to predict what future generations may do, so what we do now is critical.

If you have property that concerns you, please call our attorney, Peter Vallianos, at 528-0055 or Suzanne at 528-1786. We are always happy to answer questions.

Sally's bequest will also help enormously in our ongoing efforts to keep Monterey's open space intact, and in other ways as well. Thanks to her, our Board of Directors recently voted to match the tree warden's budget to procure new trees where needed and to restore old ones. Pursuant to this, The Nature Conservancy is involved in an effort to eradicate Dutch Elm disease. We hope those of you who have oldish elms—around two feet or more in diameter—will give the Conservancy or our President, Suzanne Hoppenstedt (phone number above), a call for more information on what procedures are being recommended. And, while we're at it—our maples are also suffering. There are a lot of marvelous old maples on private land in town which look pretty miserable. A good biyearly feeding in the spring will do wonders for them.

This year, with members helping, we finished the trails on Mount Hunger. It now remains to get them properly flagged; provide a kiosk for maps and information at the trailhead (which has been promised for the spring by our pal Jon Greene), and, of course, to keep them open—for which we will be calling on you once again come April. We fulfilled our obligation and received a grant for our work there under the State Stewardship Incentive Program (SIP).

The Board recently met with Jon Greene and Bob Rausch, who together

Monterey News Plans 30th Anniversary Celebration

The first issue of the *Monterey News* was published on March 24, 1970. To celebrate our thirtieth year of publication, the *News* will sponsor an evening of reading and remembering on Saturday, March 18, at the Meeting House.

Highlights from past issues of the *News* will be read by the writers themselves, insofar as possible. Details will be announced in the March issue.

Over the years, the *News* has been blessed and enhanced by the writings submitted by the people of our community. Please come and help us celebrate the vitality of our town and our community newspaper. It should be great fun.

created the fabulous Diane's Trail, and who are interested in joining with our land trust in building additional trails in town—perhaps along the Konkapot River extending from Bidwell Park. "It is a strikingly gentle area," Jon says. "It has a quality of calm that you don't often find on a trail walk."

Our yearly letter, along with a dues payment envelope, went out in early December, and we urge those of you who have not yet responded to please do so right away. Our membership is what keeps us going.

So please get those memberships in and let's get our Land Trust off to a good millennium start. New members can join by sending \$25 to the Monterey Land Trust, Box 504, Town. We'd love to have you.

—Joyce Scheffey & Suzanne Hoppenstedt

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Homelessness in South County

Cara Davis, Director of Construct, spoke to the congregation at the January 23 worship service of the Monterey United Church of Christ. Homelessness, she said, is an unseen epidemic in south Berkshire County. Because of the bitter cold during the previous few weeks, she and the staffs of all the other human service agencies in the county have seen a large increase in referrals and requests for help.

Her organization's newest outreach effort, Young Adults in Independent Living, is housed in the building they purchased from Hevreh on Mahaiwe Street in Great Barrington. There, above Construct's offices, homeless single men aged 18-25 can take shelter for a period of months while they pursue employment or finish their education. The goal of the program is to support these men while they develop the skills that will lead to greater independence. Construct is licensed to house up to five young men at a time there.

"What do these men need? Really?" Cara replied to a question posed by Steve Snyder. She stopped, looked around, then answered simply. "Socks. Briefs. Someone who's willing to occasionally drop off a homemade dessert. Someone who's willing to volunteer on the night housing staff schedule. Someone who could provide transportation to the larger shelter in Pittsfield when the weather's cold and

we have more people referred than we can serve."

"The homeless" is a convenient phrase, abstract enough to have little meaning. Imagine, instead just one young man who has finally found the courage to ask for help. He's looking for work, and has an interview set up for the next day.

In the morning he showers, towels dry, and then dresses in the clothes he had on yesterday. He's cleaner than his clothes, but that can't be helped. These socks, briefs, pants, and shirt are the only things he owns, except for the light jacket and gloves he was given when he arrived, if there were any warm clothes available.

What does he, and others like him, really need? Warm, clean clothing. A glass for orange juice in the morning. A pillow, blanket, toothbrush. He needs hope.

Sometimes hope comes in the strangest-looking packages. Sometimes it looks a lot like the single bed sheets you haven't used since the kids moved out. Other times, it's a bowl of fresh fruit on the kitchen table, or a mentor and a cup of coffee. Actually, often hope looks just like you.

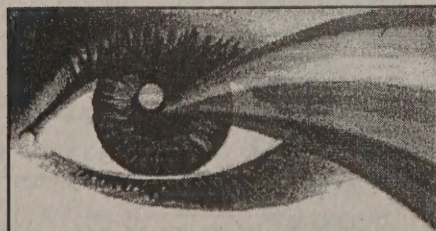
Give Cara a call during business hours at Construct, 528-1985.

— MaryKate Jordan

Rep Rap

The New Year is upon us and work resumes again at the State House. My priority remains resolving the health care crisis that hits us particularly hard in Berkshire County. With many health plans choosing not to offer service in the Berkshires, we need ardent advocacy now more than ever, especially for our senior citizens. Too many of our elders face the difficult choices of filling a needed prescription or rationing pills or paying for heat or buying food. In 1999 we had several pharmacy victories for seniors, which I would like to share.

This year's budget expanded the Senior Pharmacy Program by raising the benefit level from \$750 to \$1,250 per year. The eligibility for the program has increased by allowing individuals who earn up to \$15,492 per year and couples who earn up to \$20,769 per year to participate. The Senior Pharmacy Program will now also include people under the age of 65 who work less than forty hours per month and meet disability requirements for CommonHealth. The Legislature made a significant language change in the requirements of the Senior Pharmacy Program. The change allows individuals to access the Program after they have exhausted prescription drug coverage. Previously if applicants who had any



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other form of prescription drug coverage were automatically ineligible for the Senior Pharmacy Program. I am proud to say that we increased funding for the Senior Pharmacy Program by \$21.7 million, raising its total appropriation to \$51.7 million. The budget also includes \$20 million in increased funding for an interim unlimited benefit, catastrophic drug program to assist low-income seniors or disabled individuals who face colossal prescription bills.

I do not intend to rest on these achievements. There is still much work to be done on health care in general. The lack of quality and affordable health plans is of great concern to me because when there is no competition for service, companies can set up an arbitrary rate system and method of service delivery. This is the situation that many low- and moderate-income families and senior citizens are currently facing. In addition the precarious financial situation of many HMOs has impelled me to write the Governor to insure that consumers and our local hospitals are protected from bearing any of the fiscal burdens of poor corporate management.

As always, please feel free to contact my full-time, district office at (413) 243-0289 with any questions or concerns.

— Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins

Senator Says

Abolition of county government has taken a different course in each western Massachusetts county, but the work of retiring the old county systems and opening the way for new relationships among municipal governments has moved forward in the legislature each year since 1997. Two aspects of the county dissolution process have been of widespread interest in the Hampden, Hampshire, and Berkshire regions: provisions for continuing regional retirement systems which serve small towns, school districts, and other entities; and unfunded pension liability attributable to retired employees of the former county and to employees who are transferred to the state retirement system. The FY 2000 budget includes what legislators and advocates for employees hope will be the definitive answers on these issues.

Regional Retirement Systems: Under the old system, the county retirement board had five members: the County Treasurer, an appointee of the County Commissioners, two members elected from the system's retirees and employees, and a fifth member elected from the county board's advisory council. (The advisory council comprises the treasurers from the towns and other member units of the system.)

Under the new law, the retirement systems of former counties will be known

as regional retirement systems, retaining the name of the former county: for example, Berkshire Regional Retirement System. The membership of the Regional Systems will also change: Treasurers of abolished counties will serve as board chairmen until December 31, 2002, at which time the other four board members will appoint a chairman for a three-year term. The three elected members—two from the retirees and employees and one from the advisory council—will serve staggered terms until successors are elected for new three-year terms. The County Commissioners' appointee serves out a five-year term, at which time the other four members select a person for this fifth position, on the condition that the appointee cannot be a retiree, employee, or official of the retirement system.

Pension Liability: While this issue remained unresolved, member units of the regional retirement systems (often small towns) thought they might be stuck with the bill for the former counties, while large municipalities and school systems which had separate retirement systems appeared to get off scot-free from the costs incurred by the former counties. The final language in the FY 2000 budget generally requires, through a set formula, that all communities in an abolished county pay the portion of the unfunded liabilities associated with the county retirees and employees transferred to state government. In Hampshire and Berkshire Counties, the liabilities would be paid off over a period of at least ten years.

— Senator Andrea F. Nuciforo, Jr.

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Secure Boundaries

The recent diplomatic conversations at Shepherdstown, West Virginia, between Syria and Israel reminded me of a similar personal pursuit. I had just moved into a small cottage outside Shepherdstown after a decision to move out of a marriage: an extremely difficult and painful decision, as anyone knows who has gone through a separation and divorce. The collapse of long established standards of personal conduct and responsibility led me, pell-mell, into a redefinition of secure boundaries. Each evening, for days on end, I would take to my bicycle to ride the country roads of West Virginia's eastern panhandle in search of inner solitude and peace. Longer day trips would see me cycling stretches of the Chesapeake & Ohio Towpath to Harpers Ferry or over to the Antietam Battlefield in nearby Sharpsburg, Maryland.

It is interesting that in the midst of my own emotional "war zone," I was cycling through the solitary battlefields of the Civil War. The "cottage" that I was renting was a converted "summer kitchen" behind the main house. The upstairs, where I slept, was where the slaves slept. It was one of the few pre-Civil War houses that survived Sherman's scorched earth campaign throughout the Shenandoah and Cumberland Valleys north to the Potomac River. As I cycled those roads, sorting through emotional debris and collapsed moral standards while drinking in the magnificent natural beauty of the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers, the charm of Shepherdstown and Harpers Ferry, I was once again faced with the seemingly incongruous. I, who was engulfed in personal turmoil, was surrounded by the beauty of nature, which itself was littered with the remnants of civil disorder. The chaos of my own life

was writ large upon the villages and battlefields of the countryside.

As with the diplomatic talks between the Israelis and the Syrians, the defining issue for me was what constitutes security. Where am I safe? The nation-state wants clearly established boundaries. More significantly, it wants to trust the bordering countries to respect the boundaries. The absence of respect and trust lies at the heart of international disputes such as the one in which the Syrians and the Israelis are engaged. By the same token, it underlay the War between the States and the continued degradation of race relations. It is the same lack of trust and respect that corrodes and often destroys personal relations.

The end of the marriage, the questioning of traditional religious beliefs and values, initiated what is an ongoing search for a renewed understanding of respect and trust. My evening cycling rambles about the West Virginia countryside instilled within me an appreciation for the continuous unfolding of natural beauty. Day after day, week after week, the ever-changing display of nature drew me into its embrace. Healing occurred. My willingness to be not only an observer but also a "participant" (that is, one who is willing to be changed) in the natural world deepened my sense of self-awareness. That, in turn, enabled me to break through the static codes of my doctrinaire, religious upbringing. I realized, ever so cautiously, that, for me, security and peace arise out of dynamic and flexible boundaries rooted in trust and respect for myself and for others. The so-

Monterey News Seeks Writers

The *Monterey News* needs writers willing to take on the monthly columns, "The Town" and "Personal Notes." Amy Goldfarb and Ann Higgins have been doing good work with these columns, but both have indicated they will be unable to continue. We also need someone to write periodically about school news.

The *News* depends on writers from the community stepping forward to help out. If you are interested in taking on one of these columns, please call the editor at 528-4347. We need you.

— Will Marsh

called assurance that arose out of moral and religious certitude was illusory. As is the case with the natural world, I am not a static and inflexible creation. Relationships, whether between individuals or nation-states, are secure when they are lived in and out of growing respect and trust as opposed to rigid and doctrinaire beliefs.

In all three instances—Israel/Syria, War between the States/race relations, marital crisis—secure boundaries are dynamic and fluid. Woven into the fabric of those boundaries are respect and trust. Very slowly, I came to a renewed appreciation of those truths. Reading about the peace talks in Shepherdstown reminded me of that intense personal episode. And I am grateful.

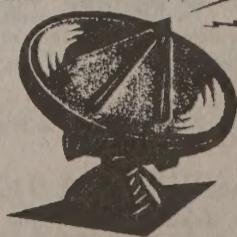
— Keith Snow

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Have Needle; Will (Time) Travel A Trio of Valentines

Lin Schrieber was living in Wellesley, Massachusetts, when she went back to her native California eleven years ago. She had a specific goal for the trip: to help her mother sort and clear out items that belonged to Lin, but that her mother "had been schlepping around for her forever."

She didn't expect to find life-affirming treasures. But, in among "the hideous bridesmaid dresses, all of my high school and college memorabilia, the knife from my baby sterling, and all the letters my father had sent while I was at camp," she found both of her baby quilts and some baby clothes.

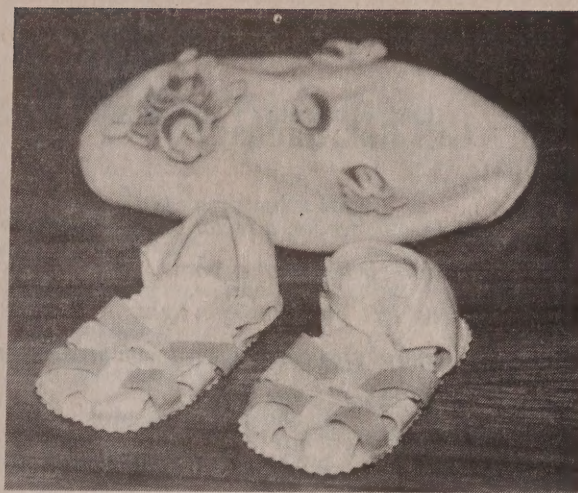
The first quilt, which she says is her "real" baby quilt, measures about 32 by 36 inches. It's bound with a strip of solid sky blue, appropriate for a girl growing up under the California sun. Her maternal grandmother made it from bright cotton prints, cut and pieced into row after row of two-inch squares, making a confetti-like array of blues, whites, reds, with a liberal sprinkling of greens, yellows, and pinks.

It's a scrappy quilt, which means its many different pieces of fabric are unrelated, except for their use in the piece itself,

although Lin also remembers one pattern being the same as an apron which her grandmother also sewed for herself. Stripes, plaids, gingham, and other bright cotton prints all dance together to trigger memories so delightful that, once she was back in Massachusetts, Lin had her quilt framed. Today it hangs in the home she shares with her husband, Richard, on Stevens Lake.

The second quilt, a gift from her paternal grandparents, is a treat for the eyes and fingertips, a confection of apricot satin. Quilted bows drape across its surface, adding an air of elegance while keeping the puffy batting in place. Fit for any storybook princess, all it lacks is what her other quilt shows in abundance: telltale marks of being well-loved, often laundered, well-worn.

"My parents were among the first to buy a home in the San Fernando Valley, so I was one of the original Valley Girls," Lin said as she brought out a third treasure. She smiled a little sheepishly. "In spite of all you've heard, not one of us ever said, 'Totally Awesome!' But," she added, "I did wear these." She placed a little beret and matching pair of sandals on the table.



Lin was a "Valley Girl" from head to toes!

Her beret was pieced from six tiny pie-shaped wedges of cream-colored wool felt, and her sandals were woven of cream and pink strips of the same material. Both headgear and footwear sport little clusters of pastel felt flowers. They were perfect, we agreed, for a Valley Girl in Training, or any other cherished very-junior miss.

The treasures Lin brought home from California are richer, to her, than any gold strike. They make a trio of Valentines to honor her birthday, just before Valentine's Day.

— MaryKate Jordan



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Gift Box, January

*Below the feeder, a rectangle of sunken snow
compressed by leather boots,
birds' feet, late afternoon light:
a neutral grey crate littered with broken sunflower shells,
no black and white dream,
no ermine gift box*

*until dawn, that frivolous piece of jewelry
with lemon highlights and hyacinth shadows,
redefines this reticule of melting snow
with a brush dipped in clover honey, in ashes of lilac,
in periwinkle dappled with chartreuse
alive with an emerald fire.*

— MaryKate Jordan

Pussy Willow

*Little pussy willow,
Through the winter's cold you slept.
When you felt the warm spring sunshine
From your shell you crept.
You laughed as the brook leaped with joy
When the ice began to break;
Then a Red-wing called to welcome spring
And you were wide awake.*

— Eleanor Kimberley

*Tonight the moon
Is as close as the trees
I feel the earth
Being pulled, a tide,
Like desire swelling to,
But never reaching its aim.
That must recede
As the vision passes.
Must wait, knowing,
It will rise again
To the distant, insistent
Beauty that beckons.*

*Tonight the coyotes
Howl and chatter.
Brittle knives of laughter
On the cold.
Bright, chaotic scorn
That tumbles toward me
As if their knowledge
Is greater than mine.
Perhaps.
Theirs is a life
Of blood, of lust,
A passion of true survival
Mine is only of dreams
That must endure*

*Tonight I stand
Alone but alive
The moon full in my eyes
Smiling, listening.
At least they can howl.
All I can summon
Is a silent, certain wish
A mute ritual
I cast to the stars
Hoping I am heard*

— Nick Hardcastle

To An Anonymous Mother

*She pirouetted through the pastures
Of my chub-cheeked child daydreams,
An enchantress of sorts
Once sustaining my breath
With the pulse of golden beams
"Perhaps she was a Russian Ballerina"
It was the passion of a dancer, I mused
That sparked a conception
That she did not choose.
Yet to you who bore this child,
That I would be
With the very same hands
I write this to thee ...
I became the woman you promised,
when whispering to infant-ears
Your baby learned to run in fields
And danced through sparkling years.
To find the realm that calls your name
With outstretched tenderness and
To thank you for the life you gave,
I await this blessedness ...*

— M. M. Hamilton

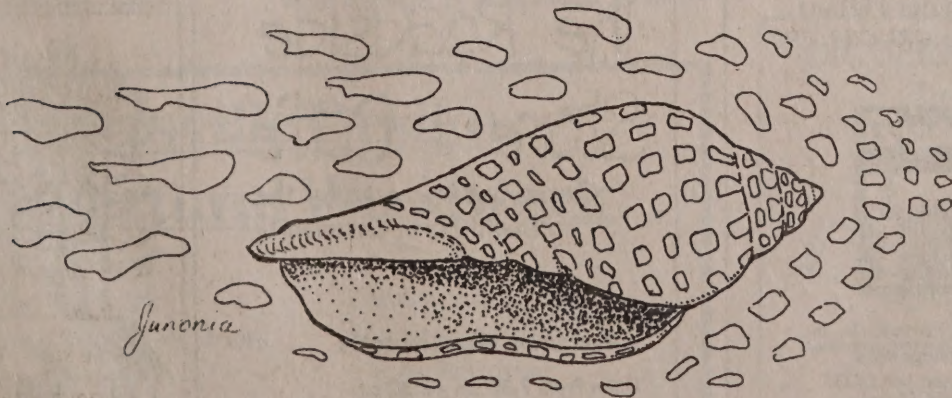
The White Ship: Poros, Greece

*Across the deep bay's blue
a white ship churns by
a long fierce moaning cry floats out
warning
strangely the echo from
the ringing misted mountains
seems twice as long and haunting

the ship disappears around the island
in half an hour, I have almost forgotten
when the great wake of it
surges in and washes the small pebbled beach
beneath my balcony

it seems like history lashing at our feet
and mourning at our faces
begging for redemption.*

— A. O. Howell



Lake Garfield Association Eco Tip for February

*Chestnuts roasting
on an open fire?
Clean chimneys and flues
with brushes of wire.*

Republican Caucus

The Republican Caucus will take place on March 9 at 7:30 p.m. following the Town Republican Meeting at 7:00 p.m. at the Firehouse. At this time nominations for candidates running for the various offices will be voted upon.

Anyone, be they Republican, Democrat or Independant, interested in running for an office should write a letter to the chairman, Mark Makuc, Monterey, MA, stating their interest in running, at which time their name will be included in those to be voted upon.

— Fran Amidon



Linda Rabiner Hebert
Broker Associate, GRI, CRS, CRB



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Noah and the Animals

Taking stock of our agricultural heritage in Monterey at the turn of the century, we could say that Kenneth (Bob) Heath may well be the most active animal producer in numbers, and Wayne Burkhart (Gould Farm) the most diversified barnyard guru. The goats of Rawson Brook Farm and the growing number of horses seen across the countryside contribute greatly to a pastoral character, worth preserving for our children and grandchildren.

When Dick Tryon had to sell his Guernsey herd due to depressed dairy prices and conditions, it was sadly nothing new in the Berkshires, but part of a continuing trend in New England particularly, marking the end of the lucky generations fortunate enough to grow up and work on a small family farm, with a milking herd as the nucleus of its livelihood.

When we lose our animals, whether they are domestic or wild, the land itself loses a sense of a living spirit, and we in turn find there is a void in our own connection to where we live and grow up. Somehow it is like leaving home, and, as they say, there is no going back.

When I first came to Monterey, the parade of animals through town to celebrate the 150th anniversary of its founding made me feel right at home. I watched the huge Percheron horses pulling the old fire wagon, followed by a powerful pair of Belgian workhorses pulling a hay

wagon, as their large hooves clomped on the pavement. Then came Bonner on her trusty Pee-Wee, and pairs of Icelandic Ponies, llamas, donkeys, goats, and sheep. They came two by two, like a Biblical pageant of the Old Testament, walking into the wooden ark that would ensure the perpetuation of each species.

So it was logical that in the parade there was a boy named Noah leading a matched pair of young steers, properly held in place by an oxbow of his own making. It turns out that Noah raises oxen himself, trains them from the time they are calves, shoes them, and makes his own "goads," a stick to prod them along, which they seldom need, obeying voice commands of "gee" and "haw" (left and right), "get along," "whoa," and "back."

Noah's mother, Ann Hanchett-Boland, recently told me that he may well have bonded as an infant with bovines, when they lived in Vermont and she would take him into the barn to milk their cow. There she would leave him next to a newborn calf. When they later moved to the Berkshires, and she gave lectures on colonial herb growing, she took him almost daily to Hancock Shaker Village. There Noah became engrossed with several breeds of working oxen. Most notable of the breeds in our early history are the Durhams, the bull calf of a milking shorthorn cow, altered at just the right age so it develops the strength of a bull, but becomes docile and manageable.

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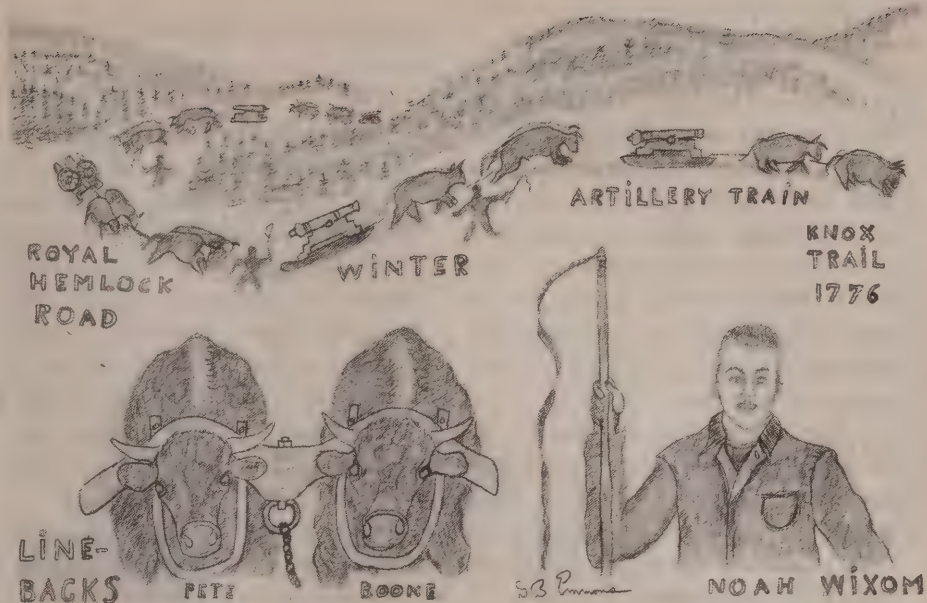
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The importance of the Durham oxen to the development of this country is apparent than in the way of life shown at the Shaker Village. Oxen, as we know, took the settlers all across this great land, (wagons west). They cleared the fields of boulders and dragged the fallen timbers out of the way, then provided the power to build the roads. The cows provided milk, butter, and cheese, and, like the oxen they produced, were better to eat than horses! Then their hides were prized to make leather products. Oxen were very inexpensive to feed, and their manure was rich in nutrients that went back into the soil as fertilizer. They rarely lost their footing or lost their heads, but continued plodding along and pulling their own weight every day of their lives.

Over the four years that it took for the steers he raised to come of age as oxen, Noah himself has grown into what an earlier generation might have called "a strapping young man." So he can also pull more than his own weight. A graduate of Monument Mountain High School, he is continuing his formal education by taking classes at Berkshire Community College in business and forestry. Supported by his own family in his special interests, he also found a mentor at the Bidwell House in Tom Weldon, who was previously manager at Sturbridge Village. Tom has participated in the development of the remarkable Bidwell House activities, which include early methods of land clearing, doing farm work with a Hafflinger horse, a Millennium Trails Project, and events featuring species of animals and barnyard fowl that have all been but forgotten in modern times.



With all of this, Noah gets help from a friend, Andy Crawford, to maintain a barn full of draft animals in Hartsville. He has a new team of Belgian horses, a unique matched pair of steers called line-backs because they are primarily black, with a well-defined white stripe down their back. There are two pairs of calves, one Blue Roans, and the other white Italian Chianinas, which grow into gigantic proportions, standing more than six feet at the shoulder.

Everyone knows that oxen played a critical part in winning the Revolutionary War. When General Washington was trying to drive British forces out of Boston but had no artillery, he directed Henry Knox to spare no expense and effort to bring the cannons down from Fort Ticonderoga. Some 140 teams of oxen were engaged to drag almost 50 heavy

pieces, some weighing 5,000 pounds, under severe winter conditions, through here, in a logistical miracle of military history that rivals Hannibal crossing the Alps with elephants. The actual route through our hills seems to be a subject of some controversy, but somehow they got through. The British surrendered Boston and this cost them all of New England, leading to eventual victory and independence for the colonies.

Our relationship with all living creatures has played and will continue to play a part in defining our perspective of Monterey. They help us remember who we are, how we got here, and where we are going with them in the next millennium.

— George Emmons

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Animals in the Cold

We have just come through a cold time. Saying words like "frigid" and "wind chill" and "bitter" makes your mouth do what your whole body feels like when it's so starkly cold outside. We scuttle from house to car, pray over our batteries, creak slowly out the driveway hoping none of those brittle metal bits that make the car go will snap and leave us stranded—on foot, on our own with this element.

This is the time I put on my longies when I am planning to be as far away from the stove as the kitchen table. I sit there, swaddled up, shaking my head over the teeny mites that bop in and out of the birdfeeder with bare feet and no jacket to speak of, just a bit of fluff. How in the world do they do it? I've read that they put all their caloric oomph into the body core, shunting warmth away from those bare feet and other extremities. Their bodies hunker down metabolically in order to keep the heat up just where it is needed, so the pipes don't freeze. I put on everything I've got and go outside just long enough to see if everybody is alive in the barnyard. By the time I get back my cheeks are stuck full of mean little icy knives. Thank goodness the brain can think up a woodshed because it looks to me like the body (mine), left to its own adaptations, would not last the night. Maybe the core would still be there the next day, but nobody would be home.

We found Earl, the rooster, in just this condition the other day. He had not been looking so good and I guess the combination of whatever was ailing him plus his

failed adaptations allowed him to check out and leave the core. I had just been thinking Earl would pull through. Even though it was minus eight and blowing, the days were getting longer and lighter. Two of Earl's wives had actually recommenced laying eggs, which is a sign their pituitary glands had picked up on the seasonal tilt toward sun and warmer times. We were getting two eggs (frozen solid) a day and Earl was crowing now and then. Always scrambling for upbeat messages to put in the little notes I write in Christmas cards, I had told a few people that Earl was picking up and spring was on the way.

Well, I spoke too soon—or maybe I should say this wasn't the kind of "picking up" I meant to be uplifting people with. "Merry Christmas to all of you from all of us, and take heart because old Earl the somewhat disabled rooster is now released from his inadequate earthly corpus and has gone to a better land where his frost-bitten comb will be re-stored and he will once again be able to fly up onto the roost at night, although he can't snuggle with his five wives because they are still down here freezing with the rest of us."

There are a few things we can do to ease the pain. When we see the poor chilly animals out there we can help them out in various ways. For instance, we put big blankets on our horses, and this makes us feel better right away. The horses look

tolerant, but these are the kind of horses that, given a choice, will stand out in the rain and sleet rather than move over a few feet and get under a roof. They stand out in the snow and it piles up on their backs without melting because their hair stands up. I read once that if you come upon a deer lying down in the snow you can tell it's dead if the snow has fallen on it and melted. That is, you can tell it was alive recently enough to be still warm enough to melt snow, but now that it's dead it's hair has lain down and there is no more insulating air-space to keep the snow cold out on the end of the hairs. So if the snow on the deer lying in front of you has *not* melted, you know ... Oh never mind. You don't know anything.



Cold weather will drive some wild animals to move into a warm house with people, or at least into the drawers with the silverware. I caught a few of these cute little poopers recently in a havahart trap, but I did not have the heart to put them out somewhere in the bitter, frigid, wind-chilly night. So I have put them in a lovely, though somewhat limited, habitat consisting of glass walls, pine shav-

Peter S. Vallianos **Attorney at Law** **528-0055**

General practice includes real estate purchases, sales, family transfers and transfers in trust, zoning, land use matters, conservation restrictions, landlord-tenant; wills, probate; commercial law.

I will meet with you at your home in Monterey.



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in the Meeting House

Keith Snow, Pastor

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ings, a piece of old horse blanket (really), clean water in a handmade ceramic cup, and a food dish with hulled organic sunflower seeds in it. There is also a beet, a corn chip, and daily fresh fruit in season. The only thing that's missing, besides of course their god-given right to travel, is an assortment of silverware to poop on. I had to draw the line—besides, this is temporary. As soon as it warms up, I will take George and Lucretia for a drive to the cemetery, which is where I have been releasing drawer mice into a stone wall for the last twenty-five years.

I would like to see the inside of that wall. I imagine regular mouse parties, at all times of the year. We have dribbled bird seed and goat grain down the cracks, provided old wool socks for refugee bedding, and generally eased our guilt in many creative ways over the years. But with the kind of cold we've just come through I knew there was no way I could put these beasties out and sleep at night. Their little cores would have been furry ice cubes by midnight, and I can't lie under the comforter with my feet on a toasty soapstone and think about that. Each of us has a personal strategy for making it through the winter, sleeping the sleep of the more-or-less just. This one with the mice is the one I happen to have hit on, this time.

— Bonner J. McAllester

About Astrology Aquarius

Here's the way it is in the sign of Aquarius: all doors are made of mirrors, until you discover that the only mirror playing tricks is your logical, linear mind, and that the rest, being Divine Order, is eminently simple.

The Sun is said to be in Aquarius from the end of the third week in January until a week or so after Valentine's Day. Since Aquarius defies linear explanation, being outside the boundaries of the merely rational alone, here are a few images of some of the countless ways the sign and its ruler, the conjunction of the planets Uranus and Saturn, may leave their mark.

During the eighteenth century, Sir William Herschel discovers the first planet in our solar system which orbits beyond Saturn, the traditional boundary of safe tribal mores. It rolls on its axis, instead of spinning, as all the previously known planets do. There is a movement afoot to call the planet Herschel, but it is finally declared more fitting to continue the tradition of calling planets after Roman deities. This planet is named Uranus, after the son of Zeus who vanquished his father.

A roomful of idealists sign a revolutionary document, declaring their commit-

ment to the ideals of democracy and freedom from any bondage imposed by a foreign nation. It is July 4, 1776. The Moon, hallmark of the emotional root of what is expressed, is in the sign of Aquarius.

A lightning bolt illuminates the night sky with a flash of blue white light. Benjamin Franklin's key-on-a-kite-string experiment enters the lexicon of U.S. folklore.

Ancient Celtic warriors wrench the sky with banshee screams, echoed in the American Civil War as the "rebel yell."

An Aquarian-born lawyer takes command of the ship of state and moves his country through secession and war, and extends the national ideal of freedom from bondage to men of color.

Alice steps through that Very Strange Looking Glass, which Mr. Dodgson inconveniently placed above the mantelpiece, and encounters yet another paradigm shift.

A virgin stands in awe before the Creator of the Universe. She lights the Shabbat candles and prays.

Holy Wisdom descends on all the people. And we all say, Yes.

— MaryKate Jordan

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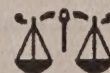
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Personal Notes

A very Happy Birthday to **Gige O'Connell** on February 1, to **Mark Makuc** and **Donna Trumbull** on February 2, to **Mike Mielke, Jr.**, on February 7, to **Claude "Tim" Burke** and **Bob Rausch** on February 9, to **Rachel Rodgers** on February 10, to **Ann Higgins** on February 11, to **Jack Jefferson** and **Lanny Lanoue** on February 14, to **Dave Gauthier** on February 15, to **Maryellen Brown** and **Arnold Pratt** on February 16, to **Kim Gero** on February 18, to **Maggie Clawson** and **Dick Tryon** on February 22, to **Jim Edelman** on February 23, to **Mark Amstead** on February 26, to **Paul Makuc**, **Morgan Schick**, and **Kayla Snyder** on February 27. **Shaen O'Connor's** Leap Year Birthday is on February 29. And Happy First Birthday on February 2 to the Amstead twins, Mitchell and Matthew.

Congratulations to **Jon Sylbert** and **Lisa Smyle** on the birth of their son, **Evan Godshalk Sylbert** on January 9.

Wedding Anniversary greetings this month go out to **Arnold** and **Judy Hayes** on February 13, and to **Don** and **Pat Amstead**, who celebrate their fortieth wedding anniversary on February 27. Congratulations to all of you and may you have many more happy years together!

Congratulations to **Deirdre Higgins**, who was a member of the alto section of the Massachusetts Music Educators Association Western District Chorus this year, and took part in the district's Senior Festival Concert at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst on January 15, 2000.

Now that the Winter Solstice has gone by, longer, sunnier days lie ahead. Enjoy the winter weather and look forward to the spring, which is not too far away. We enjoy hearing your news, and passing on birthday and anniversary greetings. If you have any you would like to share, please drop me a line at P.O. Box 351, Monterey, MA 01245, if possible, before the twelfth of each month. Thank you so much.

— Ann Higgins

Contributors

We are grateful for contributions recently received from

Kenneth & Gail Heath
Jonathan Harris & Myra Levie
Edward & Elizabeth Menaker
Terri Walter
Stanley & Edith Ross
Sylvia Allen
Daniel Zweig & Sally Patrick
Dean & Alice Allen

On The Road Again

Some of you may remember the offbeat travels and observations Joan Woodard Reed shared with the community she loved in Monterey with her monthly tales for the paper. Now she has started a new great adventure when she passed on at her winter home in Summerdale, Alabama, on January 10.

There will be a memorial service in Monterey later this spring, to be announced.

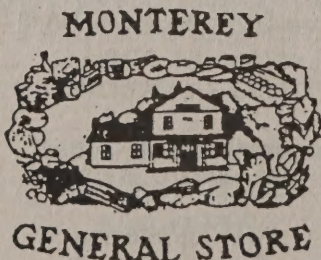
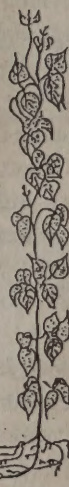
— Timothy Reed

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Calendar

Tuesday, February 1, International folk dancing, 7:30 p.m. at Gould Farm. Led by Karl Finger. Instruction for novice dancers will be provided at beginning of evening. Families welcome! What a great way to start dancing, to expand your abilities, or just to watch and catch the spirit. Suggested donation: \$5 for adults, \$2 for children. Call Karl (413-528-2963) or Kim (413-528-1804) for information, directions.

Tuesday, February 15

Free blood pressure clinic, 9:00-10:30 a.m., basement of Town Offices, administered by Visiting Nurses Assoc.

International folk dancing, 7:30 p.m. at Gould Farm. Led by Karl Finger. See information under Feb. 1 above.

Monday, February 21, Town Hall closed for Presidents Day.

Saturday, February 26, Square and contra dancing, 8:30-11:30 p.m. at the Sheffield Grange, Rt. 7, Sheffield, Mass. Music by Mountain Laurel, calling by Christine Hale. All dances are taught, and beginners and children are welcome. Refreshments at intermission. Adults \$5, children \$2. Information 413-528-9385.

Tuesday, February 29, An extra day for all to enjoy!

Tuesday, March 7, International folk dancing, 7:30 p.m. at Gould Farm. See information under Feb. 1 above.

Hear ye, hear ye!

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Monday-Friday

8 a.m.-3 p.m. Public Skating
3 p.m.-5 p.m. Hockey

Tuesday and Friday

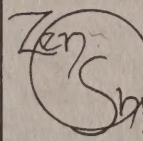
7 p.m. Men's Hockey

Saturday

8 a.m.-Noon Kids' Hockey
Noon-3 p.m. Public Skating
3 p.m.-5 p.m. Hockey
5 p.m.-7 p.m. Icemaking
7 p.m.-9 p.m. Town Skating Party

Sunday

9 a.m.-Noon Men's Hockey
Noon-3 p.m. Public Skating
3 p.m.-5 p.m. Hockey



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The Observer

December 26-January 25

High temp. (1/4) 60°
Low temp. (1/18) -11°
Avg. high temp. 30.3°
Avg. low temp. 11.7°
Avg. temp. 21.0°
High wind gust (1/14) 43 mph.
Total precipitation
(rain and melted snow) 3.11"
Snowfall 20.5"
Precipitation occurred on 16 days.
Barometric press. data not available.



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Our editorial address is *Monterey News*, P. O. Box 9, Monterey, MA, 01245. We invite letters, articles, drawings, poetry, and photographs from readers. Please send submissions (on PC disk if possible) by the fifteenth of the month before publication, addressed to the attention of the Editor. Send any change of address, or initial request to receive the

News by mail (free!) to Barbara Tryon, Business Manager. We will typeset a text-only ad for your Monterey-based business, service, or event, or advertisers may submit an ad with graphics on a PC formatted disk. Address your request for advertising rates and further information to the Editor, or telephone us in Monterey at 413-528-4347.

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*Contributions from local artists this month: George Emmons, p. 11;
Bonner McAllester, p. 12; Glynis Oliver, pp. 2, 9.*

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MONTEREY NEWS

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